

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 15-19, 22, and 24 have been amended by the present amendment. The amendments are fully supported by the application as originally filed.

As amended, claim 1 recites a printing apparatus including a *queue management unit* that holds (1) normal print jobs, and (2) password-protected print jobs, and manages the order of all print jobs until a plurality of passwords are entered, where each password is associated with one of the password-attached print jobs. Claim 1 further recites a *control unit* for sequentially carrying out, upon entry of the plurality of passwords, the printing of the password-attached print jobs in order of entry of the passwords and in preference over the normal print jobs that are waiting to print. Independent claims 15-19, 22, and 24 recite similar features of the Applicant's claimed invention.

In other words, claim 1 and the other independent claims have been amended to recite a plurality of password-attached print jobs, where a plurality of passwords must be entered to allow printing of these password-attached print jobs, each password associated with one of the password-attached print jobs.

As described in Applicant's specification, confidential print jobs can be password-protected, and execution of these password-protected print jobs occurs in order of password entry (see, e.g., specification at page 3, lines 13-18; and page 15, lines 16-18).

Claims 1-7, 9-16, 18, 19, and 24 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,058,249 to Matsuda et al. ("Matsuda"). Claims 8, 17, and 20-22 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsuda in view of U.S. Patent 6,567,180 to Kageyama et al. ("Kageyama"). Claim 23 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsuda in view of Kageyama, and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,956,471 to Ueda et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Matsuda does not teach or suggest a printing apparatus or method in which a plurality of passwords associated with a plurality of password-attached print jobs are entered, or where the password-attached print jobs are printed in order of entry of the passwords.

In Matsuda, a "print job which can not be executed" is one that requires entry of a password (see column 16, lines 16-18). This type of password-protected print job is assigned the lowest priority level "and is prevented from being executed" (see column 23, lines 65-67). Subsequently, when a password is input, the priority level of the password-protected print job changes to a high priority (priority level 8) (see column 24, lines 1-3). As described in Matsuda, when two or more print jobs are simultaneously generated, the print job of the highest priority level is executed prior to any other print job (see column 23, lines 58-61).

However, Matsuda is completely silent regarding entry of a plurality of passwords for a plurality of password-attached print jobs, or printing of the plural password-attached print jobs "in order of entry of passwords" (see claim 1 of Applicant's claimed invention).

Therefore, Matsuda does not teach or suggest the above claimed features of the Applicant's claimed invention.

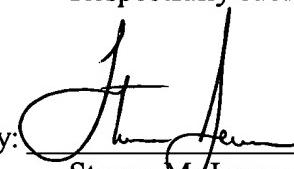
The deficiencies of the Matsuda reference have been outlined above. The Kageyama reference, however, cannot make up for these deficiencies. Specifically, Kageyama discloses a printing apparatus that carries out print jobs transmitted from a plurality of computers in which the print jobs are printed in order of reception, based on a serial number. These serial numbers, however, do not correspond to an entered password of the Applicant's claimed invention. Thus, like Matsuda, Kageyama does not teach, suggest, or mention anything about printing password-attached print jobs in the order of password entry. Furthermore, Kageyama also does not teach, suggest, or mention separating two password-attached print jobs by a predetermined amount of time or, alternatively, interposing a normal print job between the two so that one password-attached print job does not immediately follow another password-attached print job.

With respect to claim 23, the Ueda reference cannot make up for the deficiencies of the Matsuda and Kageyama references. More specifically, Ueda does not teach, suggest, or mention printing password-attached print jobs in the order of password entry. Furthermore, Ueda does not teach, mention or suggest separating two password-attached print jobs by a predetermined amount of time or, alternatively, interposing a normal print job between the two so that one password-attached print job does not immediately follow another password-attached print job.

It is believed that the claims are in condition for immediate allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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